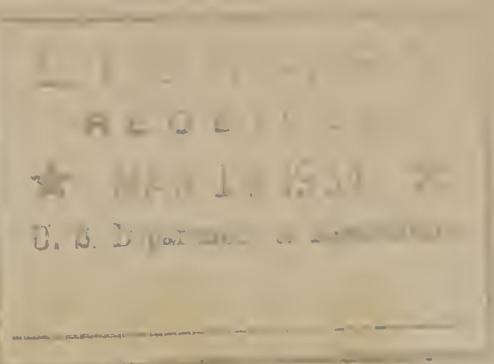


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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations, Tuesday, January 2, 1934.

Happy new year to you one and all. Today we are turning our faces toward the rising sun with high hopes in our hearts for a bigger and better year. I've found that after all the new year, when we reach its end, will have been just about what we made it. My most sincere wish for the coming year is that you all have good health and be happy and contented in your work whatever it may be. Good health and happiness depend to a considerable degree upon our surroundings, our living conditions and the general attitude of our neighbors toward us and we toward them. If we all join together we can do a lot in 1934 toward improving our neighborhood and the place to begin is at home.

Last week, you will doubtless recall, Dr. Louise Stanley, chief of the Bureau of Home Economics, told you about a survey that is to be made to determine the need for repairs and for the installation of modern sanitary and labor saving equipment in the farm homes of the United States. This survey will also determine the extent to which the owners of farm homes might avail themselves of Government loans at a low rate of interest, the money to be used for making these repairs and improvements. I was brought up in one of those farm homes where a wash tub in the kitchen and a washboiler on the kitchen stove constituted the sole and only means of achieving the very essential Saturday night cleanup, and every drop of the water had to be lugged into the house from a pump in the yard and likewise carried out again. God speed the day when every farm home in the land worth \$500 or more will have a bathtub and a kitchen sink with plenty of running water.

My part of the farm home improvement program has to do with the home surroundings, with the things outside of the home which go to make the place more attractive and livable. I refer to the grassy lawns, the shade trees around the house, the borders of shrubbery around the house foundations, the beds and borders of flowering plants, and last but not least the provision of a good fruit and vegetable garden from which the family may be amply supplied with wholesome foods. I'll admit that it is desirable to have money to improve your home surroundings, you may need seeds and fertilizers, or a few extra tools, but let's see for a moment what we can do without a cent of money but by our own labor.

First as to the lawn around the house. Let us suppose that we have practically nothing in the way of a lawn. The first thing will be to plow the ground then smooth and grade it so as to fill any depressions. Seems to me I've heard that word "depression" before. Well anyway let's fill the depression or depressions, and while we are about it it will be a good

idea to work a few loads of old, well rotted, barnyard compost into the soil to improve its fertility and moisture holding capacity. Next we want to rake and roll the ground until we have the soil rather firm and the surface smooth and even. Now if we can afford to buy lawn grass seed that may be the easiest way to get a lawn, but you folks in the south have a much better way because you can go into some clean pasture and dig two or three loads of carpet grass or bermuda grass and simply plant the clumps of roots every few inches on your lawn. You New England folks can plant the bent grasses in the same way, while those of you who live in the regions where Kentucky bluegrass grows well can go into a pasture field and cut strips of sod and cover your lawn with sod. And here is a point, the cutting and laying of the sod can often be done when the soil is too wet for plowing or the planting of corn, cotton or working any of the cultivated crops so the sodding of the lawn will not interfere with the regular farm work.

Shade trees around the home add not only to the appearance of the home but to the comfort of its occupants. You can plant shade trees without the expenditure of money. Of course it would be preferable to go to a nursery and get nursery grown trees but the wild ones that you can bring in from the fields and the woods will serve your purpose fairly well. I should have suggested that you make a plan of your home surroundings and locate the trees on this plan, but if you started out with the lawn there is still time to do all of the planning. Be sure that you locate your shade trees with the following in mind: First do not plant shade trees too near the house; second, plant shade trees where they will provide shade where and when you want it; third, don't fill the front lawn with trees so as to hide the house but plant your shade trees so that they will flank the house and form a framework with the house as the center of the picture. In case you bring small oaks, elms, maples, hackberry, or any native trees from the woods and fields, be sure to get as much of their lateral root system as possible and it is a good idea to bring a big lump of soil around the roots. Be sure to tramp the soil firmly about the roots of each tree as you set it.

Now a word about planting shrubbery around the home. Here again we would all prefer to go to some nursery and select \$75 or \$100 worth of evergreens and choice shrubs to plant around the foundation of our house but we can make a good start with the native bushes that grow wild in our part of the country. Perhaps we can afford a few small nursery-grown evergreens that will soon grow to good size, then supplement these with the native plants. In our garden calendar periods during the coming year it will be my aim and purpose to suggest the ways in which you can not only improve your home appearances but to have the best fruit and vegetable gardens ever.